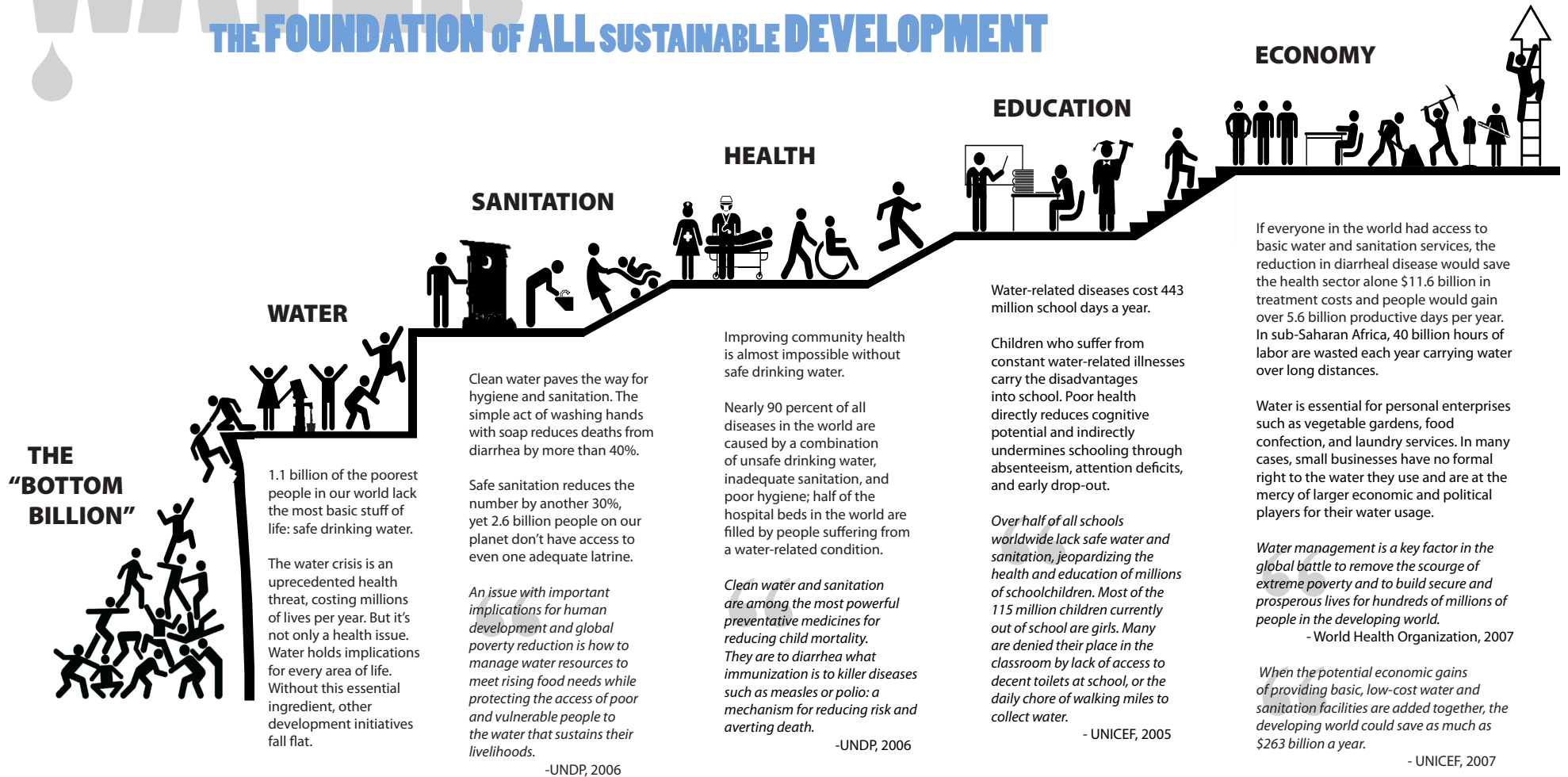


# WATER

## THE FOUNDATION OF ALL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



### The "Bottom Billion" and The Poverty Trap

The majority of the 5 billion people in the "developing world" are getting richer at an unprecedented rate. However, The poorest of the poor are trapped. Civil wars, lack of natural resources, and bad governance are all contributing factors to the perennial poverty of this "bottom billion."

When poverty is extreme, the poor do not have the ability—by themselves—to get out of their situation. The statistics indicate a two-way relationship between extreme poverty and lack of access to safe water. About two-thirds of those without access to safe water live on less than \$2 a day. Half of these—roughly equivalent to the population of the United States—live on less than \$1 a day. Even pooling their resources, these communities will never be able to afford a well for safe water.

Access to clean water is the foundation for other forms of development. Without easy access to water that is safe, countless hours are spent in water collection, household income is spent on purchasing water and medical treatment for water-related diseases. These factors contribute to keeping people trapped in poverty.

Safe, clean water removes the single heaviest burden from the lives of the poorest in our world. Not having to deal with this daily crisis means time for school and work, life and health, and allows individuals and communities to plan for tomorrow.